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WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION

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Subject Matter

Effect of Vitamin Deficiency in the Diet of a Young Married American Couple

Type of Presentation

Modern Drama

Approximate Length

Eight Minutes

Source

"LISTEN AMERICA"

(Women's National Emergency Committee and NBC)

EFFECT OF VITAMIN DEFICIENCY IN THE DIET OF A YOUNG MARRIED AMERICAN COUPLE

ANNOUNCER: It is a vitally important thing for the science of nutrition to have simple, dependable tests that will spot any vitamin deficiency in the early stages. The sooner you can get at any disease the better chance you have to cure it. These early stages are called "sub-clinical" cases, and they do so much damage that our whole defense program may be impaired by them. Tonight we bring you the story of an actual sub-clinical case—though of course names and details are changed to prevent identification.

(MUSIC AND UNDER:)

Listen as Bill G ---, skilled worker, who after years of grim unemployment, at last has a defense job driving a movable crane in an airplane factory. He and his wife Sally face a bright new future.

(MUSIC FADING OUT, SOUNDS COFFEE PERKING AND EGGS FRYING FADING IN)

On this early morning of the second day of his new job ..

SALLY: (CALLING) Coffee's ready, Bill ...

(PERKING OUT)

Your eggs will be done in a minute.

BILL: (ENTERING) (TIRED) Oh, never mind them, Sally -- just some coffee.

SALLY: But darling, you can't work on just liquids !

BILL: Well, that's all I can take this morning. Funny, isn't it -- now that we've got plenty of food, I don't give a hang about it.

SALLY: (ANXIOUSLY) Bill -- what's the matter? You slept all right, didn't you? I had to call you twice.

BILL: (WEARILY) Oh, sure. I slept -- like a dead man. But I don't get rested. I bet I could doze off again this minute.

SALLY: Your eggs are done --

(EXITING OUT)

BILL: Come on, eat and you'll feel better.

BILL: I just can't eat em, Sally -- Now don't look like that. I can't help it, can I?

SALLY: (WORRIED) But, Bill, I don't understand --

BILL: (HOPELESSLY) Yeah I know. I ought to be feeling swell. Everything looks rosey -- me with a good job helping my country -- a nice home, and we're going to have a baby. We've got our chance at last and -- I never felt so rotten in my life. (SIGHS) I don't know -- maybe I was out of work too long. Maybe I kind of got off the track.

SALLY: Bill, you've got to go to the doctor!

BILL: What about? I just get sort of jittery. And sometimes I drift around in a kind of weary daze -- like yesterday when I was driving the crane. All of a sudden everything got hazy -- you know, I could hardly see the big hangar right in front of me.

SALLY: Bill!

BILL: Oh, it all cleared up in a minute.

SALLY: Darling, you're going to stay home today!

BILL: Stay home on the second day of a new job? - Not a chance.

(ALARM CLOCK RINGS)

Time to go.

(PUSHES CHAIR BACK)

Goodbye - honey.

SALLY: Here's your lunch box -- Oh, Bill, I wish you'd stay ..

BILL: I'm okay, honey. I'll get used to working again after a couple of days.

(MUSIC SNEAKS IN . . .)

BILL: Goodbye, sweet ... don't worry ...

(MUSIC UP QUICK AND OUT UNDER)

(CRANE MOTOR .. CLANK OF METAL ... VOICES AND
RATTLE OF CHAINS OFF MIKE)

TOM: (OFF MIKE .. CALLING) Okay, Bill, okay!

BILL: (ON MIKE) Muh? .. What?

TOM: Get going and take this one up easy!

BILL: Sure, sure, here she goes !

(TOOT TOOT OF CRANE GRINDING ... ENGINE UP)

TOM: (OFF) Hey ! Take it easy, Bill !

BILL: (ON MIKE ... DAZEDLY) Sure, take it easy .. that's what I'd like to do ... lean right back against these levers and sleep for a week.

(MOTOR ACCELERATES)

JAKE: (CALLING) Hey, Bill, go slower !

BILL: Slower .. huh ! Hey ! (PANICKY) Where's that lever .. can't see it ... can't find it ..

(MOTOR ACCELERATES MORE)

VOICES: (OFF MIKE ... OVERLAPPING ... SHOUTING) Bill! Hey !
Stop that crane! -- He's outa control ! Gonna smash into the hangar ! Look out, Bill !

(TERRIFIC DRAWNOUT CRASH)

(MUSIC)

SALLY: Oh, Bill darling -- if I ever get you out of this hospital,

SALLY: I'll make you eat enough for two men !

BILL: (NOW FULL OF LIFE) Honey, it wasn't your fault. As Doc says, we just spent too many years without the right food —

SALLY: Oh, darling, if only I hadn't let you go to work that day !

BILL: But it's lucky I went — the way it turned out. What's a couple of fractured ribs now that I know what's the matter with me? Honey, everything's going to turn out fine. Doc talked to my boss and he's keep my job for me. We're going to work everything out swell.

(GONG BOOMS OFF MIKE)

BILL: Listen — you know ~~what~~ that is, honey?

SALLY: Why — that's the gong they ring for the doctors.

BILL: Not on your life. That's the gong at the ringside — and you know what it says? It says "Time ! Time, Bill ! and come out of your corner fighting!"

(MUSIC CURTAIN:)

(APPLAUSE)

ANNOUNCER: This story of Bill and Sally shows the amazing thing about the food we eat — and the food we don't eat and how it affects our personal lives for better and for worse. Bill's history showed previous unemployment and low income. That often means sub-clinical vitamin deficiency. This multiple deficiency was enough to impair his reflexes; so in a tight spot they went back on him.